

VZCZCXRO0272
PP RUEHHM
DE RUEHHI #1664 2611730
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 181730Z SEP 07
FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6367
INFO RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH 3707
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 2438
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 5968

UNCLAS HANOI 001664

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DEPT FOR EEB/TRA/AN AND EAP/MLS
SINGAPORE FOR FAA MARY WALSH AND MIKE DANIEL
BANGKOK FOR TSA SHARON WALLOPPILLAI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAIR](#) [KTIA](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: CIVAIR VIETNAM WILL GET BACK TO US ON OPEN SKIES DEMARCHE

REF: STATE 123649

11. (U) On September 17 we met with Vo Huy Cuong, Director of Civil Aviation Administration of Vietnam (CAAV)'s Air Transport Department to gauge the government of Vietnam's (GVN) interest in negotiating an Open Skies Treaty with the United States, per reftel instructions. We underscored in our demarche the accompanying memorandum to the December 2003 Air Transport Agreement negotiated between the two countries, in which the delegations noted "their governments' expectations to meet within four years to consider further expansion of commercial aviation opportunities for the airlines of each side." Vu Hong Quang, Air Transport Department and To Tu Hung, Manager of CAAV's International Affairs Division, also attended the meeting.

12. (SBU) Cuong, a member of Vietnam's delegation during the June 18-20, 2003 U.S.-Vietnam Aviation Negotiations, responded that the 2003 U.S.-Vietnam Air Transport Agreement already stands as the "most liberal" bilateral aviation agreement ever negotiated by the GVN, and personally called an Open Skies Agreement "unavoidable." He deferred judgment on the way forward, however, to the CAAV's management board currently in Montreal for the September 18-28 International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Session. He promised to contact Post following the Board's return at the end of the month to explore "where and when to negotiate what we promised to do four years ago."

13. (SBU) In a separate but related note, on August 6, Vietnam Airlines filed with the U.S. Department of Transportation for a two-year exemption and a foreign air carrier permit to fly to the United States. The filing states, "On or about October 28, 2008, Vietnam Airlines intends to introduce Ho Chi Minh City-Osaka-Los Angeles combination flights." This will now trigger a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA), which some of our contacts say Vietnam is unlikely to pass. Post will report further developments and contacts as they occur.

14. (SBU) Action request for EEB/TRA/AN: Please pass this cable to DAS John Byerly, currently in Montreal for the ICAO Session. He may want to consider meeting informally with the GVN delegation to discuss further the possibility of an Open Skies Agreement.

MICHALAK